

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Couper.*



BAD NEWS FOR MANCHESTER.

DAVID LLOYD'S LAST WILL.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

CHAPTER I.—THE DAYS OF THE COTTON FAMINE.

At the date of the commencement of this story, in October, 1862, the hard times, which were inaugurated for Lancashire and its great cotton metropolis Manchester by the fall of Fort Sumter and the proclamation of the blockade of the Southern ports, had been endured long enough to try the most sanguine spirits, and to test the most trusting hearts.

Since the beginning of the year, which had now no more than eight or nine wintry weeks in store, the dire distress and poverty had been steadily widening and deepening from week to week, like the slowly rising waters of a deluge. In prospect of the winter, which already made its coming felt in the increasing sharpness of the frosts, the whole population of the cotton district shuddered with a universal heart-quake. Already, during this last fortnight of October, there had been, in six only out of the twenty-eight unions of the distressed districts, no

fewer than one hundred and ninety-two thousand persons absolutely destitute of food and fuel, and helplessly dependent for every necessary of life upon the poor-rates of their own unions, or upon the charity of the people of England. Every day new claimants for relief were coming clamorously forward, or more often were discovered in their desperate shame of poverty by those who would not leave them to perish in their shamefacedness. At the opening of the year 1862 the cotton operatives had been, to quote the words of one of their historians, "if left to themselves, like a ship's crew upon short provisions, and those unequally distributed, and without chart or compass, and no prospect of getting to land." But before the close of this saddest of all years for Lancashire, their position was miserably worse. There was still no sight of land, and the short allowance had dwindled down into no bread, as the wintry season advanced quickly upon them. "If left to themselves," says the historian. But, as all the world knows, the cotton operatives were not abandoned in their extremity. Vast as the gulf was, the hand of charity had treasures to fling into it; and they were flung in with almost reckless prodigality, until the day came when charity herself was told to stay her hand, for that there was enough.

It is the last Sunday of this dark and ominous October. The Sunday-schools, which are so popular an institution in Manchester, are more thronged than ever by their somewhat saddened, but still brave and almost hopeful, bands of young men and women, mill-hands most of them, who are either thrown out of employment altogether, or are only working half time. One school in particular, built near the centre of a populous locality, where the dwellings of the operatives abound, is alive with eager scholars this Sunday afternoon. It is a handsome and new building, fresh from the hands of the builder, and possessing every accommodation and comfort considered essential for its purpose. There is a central hall, spacious and lofty, and well lighted and ventilated by windows in a dome in the roof. Round the hall are two storeys of class-rooms, large enough for classes of forty or fifty scholars; the lower ones opening upon the ground-floor, and the upper ones upon a gallery, which runs round the spacious room, and contains seats for about two hundred persons. Altogether the central school-room will hold from eight to nine hundred scholars with ease and comfort. At one end is a platform, with a small raised pulpit in the middle; at the other are small alcove-like recesses, in which stand the desks of the treasurer and secretary, and other office-bearers of the school. Everything is complete and finished; and the whole place is airy, lightsome, and handsome. To-day the seats are even better filled than usual, and there is no room to spare, for it is pleasant to escape from the dark, dull, cold hearths, where there is neither fire nor light enough to put one cheerful thought into the depressed hearts, and to come into the warm air and welcome daylight of this spacious building, where the sound of song rings pleasantly under the vaulted roof. There is companionship too—decent, kind, and sympathising companionship. The grey October light falls upon rows of faces, all a little grave beyond the seriousness due to the sacred day, and the place in which they are assembled; but all possessing a certain expression of courage and independent bearing. They scarcely look like men and women, like boys and girls, suffering sharp

but hidden pangs of hunger; for they have something of the Spartan spirit in them. They are listening now with intent earnestness; and at intervals a long-drawn breath is heard from end to end of the hall, as if every one sighed, yet tried to smother the sigh in the hearing of their neighbours. The speaker is telling them of poverty greater than their own, and of lower depths of misery in other districts, which they have not themselves as yet sounded.

The speaker stands upon the platform at the central pulpit, from which he can see every face in the room before him; and from time to time, in the deep earnestness of his address, he leans over the crimson cushion which lies on the stand before him, and in lowered tones, and with a direct and searching gaze, as if he singled out each one of his hearers, and spoke personally to him, he tells them of what he has himself seen and heard at Ashton and Blackburn, where the famine reigns with absolute and terrible power. He is a man whom it would be hard to classify as old or young. The first impression that his face produces is that of one who has long since left youth, with its dreams and passions, far behind him; yet, upon a second and closer inspection, it is evident that his age is not so much that of years as of circumstances. Some event of his life, too much brooded over, has aged him. The expression of his face is one of a deep and almost sorrowful gravity, across which glimmers a smile, like some stray pale beam of sunshine, entering in through church windows, and playing for a moment upon the monuments of the dead. His eyes shine with a kindly and benevolent light, but they have a look as if they gazed habitually farther than other eyes, and saw more than they could do. Perhaps the mouth, tremulous and ill-controlled, is the weakest feature in his face, betraying as it does a temperament too sensitive, and far too easily touched, for the strain of these hard times upon his sympathies. The tones in which he speaks are at times as tremulous as the lips which utter them, but they are never harsh, and they win their way irresistibly to the hearts of his hearers, the faltering voice often bringing the ready tears to their eyes. There is about him a nameless and indescribable charm, though he is not a handsome man; a certain magnetism, which operates powerfully upon all who are brought within his influence. Of the seven or eight hundred persons forming the school which he is addressing, both scholars and teachers, there are few, even to the youngest child, who have not at some time or another brought some special personal trouble to confide to him, and gone away with the consolation of feeling that their sorrow has been understood and sympathised with.

"I have been telling you simple facts," said Mark Fletcher, towards the close of his address, as he leaned upon the cushion before him, and caught and kept the eye of the whole school as if it was one individual, into whose eyes he could look and read the sentiments his words aroused. "I went into a cellar at Ashton, and found a mother on her death-bed with five little children about her clamouring for food; one of them lying on the same pillow, and crying for bread in her dying ear. It was almost the last sound she heard on earth. In the house above her sat an old man of seventy and more, with no furniture about him except the box on which he sat, and he was breaking that up by splinters to keep alive a spark of fire in the grate before him. Some of you are very

poor also," he said, and his voice fell into a key of sorrowful compassion: "you have owned to me, coming in here this afternoon, that no more than one poor meal has crossed your lips to-day; and that you are saving your food till it grows dark, because you can bear hunger better in the day-time. Nay, do not hang your heads, and blush for it. Did our Lord and Master never feel the sore need of hunger, and the sick craving for food? Is he a stranger to this form of human suffering? No. Christ has hungered, he has thirsted, he has sighed and wept in secret as you do. Some of you who have known his love will remember also his words: 'The disciple is not greater than his master; nor the servant than his lord.' I think, perhaps, if he stood here in my place to-day—it might be, I cannot tell—but it might be, that he would work no miracle for you, that he would do no more for you than bid you look on Himself, and bear your privations bravely for his sake."

The speaker paused, and bent his head for a moment, and his eyelids closed over the eyes, as if the tears had started to them, and dimmed his sight; but before the murmur—a rustling, sobbing murmur—which ran through the ranks before him had subsided, he spoke again.

"And you can look upon Him now," he continued; "it may be that we shall all see him more clearly through the mist of tears than in the sunshine of prosperity. You have never beheld his face very near to you, perhaps. But now, ye poor, hungry, needy creatures, his creatures as ye are, look up through your tears, and it may be you shall see his face bending over you with a nearness and a tenderness which will give you courage to bear anything which he may ordain for you. If we only hear his voice in the darkness, it will make the darkness light to us."

Once more he paused, and then spoke again, in a familiar, natural tone, as if he and one other alone were talking over some great trouble together.

"Come to me, and tell me all about it," he said. "I belong to you, and you are my own people. I have no ties and relatives besides you. I can say of you, as Christ said of his disciples, 'Behold my brothers and my sisters!' Come to me, then, frankly. I have plenty and to spare yet; and what I have I will share with you."

He looked at them silently for a few seconds, with a tender and comprehensive regard, which was answered by many grateful and affectionate glances sent back to him in silence. The friendship between the school and its superintendent, for Mark Fletcher was its chief and head, was as the friendship of a man and his comrade. The bond had become even closer and more special than the bond between a pastor and his church; for there was no element of official or priestly character in it, but a homely and pleasant familiarity, blended with a sense of mutual election. It was Mark Fletcher who had sought them out, and gathered them together into close companionship, which was free from all degradation. This was the plot in the vineyard of his own seeking and dressing. There was not a scholar there whose name he did not know, or whose history was altogether a secret to him. While on their side there was not one among them who did not look up to him as the true model of what a Christian ought to be. In a few minutes, after the superintendent had announced certain meetings during the week, the dismissal hymn was sung, and the service of the day closed; but the dispersal of

the scholars was slow. They were in no hurry to quit the cheerful room for their own cold hearths, and many of them lingered to exchange news, and compare their report of the hard times with those who lived in different parts of the city; while a few followed their superintendent to his private room, having something to say which needed both time and quietness for the saying.

CHAPTER II.—THE SUPERINTENDENT'S LEVEE.

THE superintendent's room contained a large group of visitors as usual. It was a custom of long standing; for not one of the band of teachers, numbering from fifty to sixty, failed from time to time to seek the counsel of their superintendent after the business of the school was over. There was a subtle flattery in this homage which might have injured a nature less single, and less devoted to his work than was Mark Fletcher. The school had become a popular one from several causes, and there was no more lack of teachers than of scholars. It was connected with, and supported by, a rich congregation, and its teachers included in their ranks some of the most educated and wealthiest of Manchester society. More than one eligible and happy marriage had been the result of the necessary companionship in the same interests and pursuits. Moreover it was thoroughly well managed, and the work in all its branches was carried out efficiently and energetically. To be engaged in this Sunday-school was to be at work in a place where a cordial and genial spirit was cherished throughout its various classes. Mark Fletcher, who was the heart and soul of it, was as popular with the teachers as with the scholars. The young men looked upon him as a trusty friend whose counsel was valuable to them, and who was always ready to countenance and maintain them in any right course; while the young ladies, with their trivial coquetties and vanities not entirely renounced in their character as Sunday-school teachers, fluttered about him with a thousand delicate attentions and flatteries with which they distinguished him as if by common consent. It was no easy position to be filled by a man still comparatively young in years.

There was a slight tinge of romance surrounding Mark Fletcher, which attracted these young people, and made it safe for them to expend upon him their harmless attentions. It was known among them that ten years ago, while still a very young man of two or three-and-twenty, he had suffered the loss of a girl betrothed to him, by a sudden and shocking death. From that time he had renounced all thought of marriage, and the common happiness of men; and like the devotees of olden times, like the great apostle of the Gentiles, he had given himself to a single life, and to the work of the church. This last consecration had been only as a layman, for he had heard no call to the ministry, and received no vocation for the priesthood. It was certain, however, that of his large salary as a clerk in one of the first banks in the city, he devoted by far the greater portion to deeds of charity, and that all his leisure hours, extending often to whole nights spent in watches beside the sick and dying, were given up, simply and solely, to the purpose of promoting in one way or another the welfare of his fellow-beings.

The group of waiting, venerating teachers gathered eagerly around Mark Fletcher as he entered his private room, and one after another, with almost impatient haste, claimed his attention to themselves.

"I wish you would speak to Ann Maudsley," said one, with a discontented air; "she is above my hand. You know the girl? With red hair, and a wild, sulky look."

"I know her well," answered Mark, "and I will talk to her. She is a poor, desolate creature, with a harsh stepmother at home. If you can win her, you will gain a triumph indeed. You will have patience with her still, I am sure."

The quiet smile with which he spoke received an answering smile.

"Mr. Fletcher," said another, "three more of my girls are out of work now. The mill stopped last week."

"What are their names?" he inquired.

"Alice and Charlotte Crocker, and Mary Fairclough," was the answer.

"They have a little money in our savings' bank," replied Mark, with a wonderful power of memory; "when that is gone, we will see what can be done."

"It is very hard work," said the young teacher, sighing heavily.

"Very hard," answered Mark, with a light in his eyes which made her downcast face brighter, "yet we know One whose whole life's work was far harder."

"The female teachers have commissioned me to speak to you," said a third, with some solemnity and importance in her manner. "We held a meeting on Friday, and agreed to wear our dresses of last winter, and to buy no new ones of any kind. There are thirty of us, and we calculated that we shall have at the least £150 to hand over to you or the committee. We should like you to distribute it as you think best; and if we look shabby, we shall all be shabby together."

"Why! this is a noble thing of you, and I thank God for your self-denial," exclaimed Mark, cheerfully, and pressing cordially the small hand which lingered, with a frank friendliness, in his own.

"And mamma says you are to be sure to come and tell her of any very bad case. You will not forget?"

"I will not forget," answered Mark.

"Fletcher," murmured a disconsolate voice in his ear, "my wedding with Mary is put off again. There are other troubles in the world besides those of the poor folk. We have been waiting for better times these twelve months."

"I'm sorry for you," he said, with real and ready sympathy; "but there are worse griefs than that. Death is harder to bear."

There was a slight shadow now upon Mark Fletcher's face, which did not quite pass away as he listened to and answered one after another of the little throng. They dispersed at last, leaving only one behind them, who had taken the superintendent's own chair at the head of the table, as if she was quite at home in his room, and did not intend to speak until she could be alone with him. She had been apparently absorbed in the study of her class-book, but when the last of the group were gone, she lifted up her face to meet Mark's eyes.

It was a pleasant face for his eyes to rest upon; perhaps the pleasantest of all the fair and fresh young girl faces which had surrounded him during the afternoon. There was a quick life and vivacity in every feature. The large and steady eyes, grey as most English eyes are, were lit up with a flashing lustre and gleam behind their dark irides, which gave them a brightness grey eyes do not often possess.

Her lips moved readily either for speech or smiles, and one could see that laughter often bubbled over them, like the bubbling of a brook in the sunlight. But at this moment there was a nervous twitching about them, and a redness in the opened eyelids, which betrayed that tears had been smarting there, and were ready to fall at the first tone of sympathy and kindness. She drew her hand quickly over her face, as if she could control the rebellious muscles; but when she spoke her voice was uncertain, and a little lower than usual.

"Cousin Mark, I want you to come home to tea with me," she said.

"Not to-day, Barry," he answered, "I have some work to do to-night."

"What! more work!" she exclaimed, almost resentfully. "Surely you have done enough for one day; and I do not want to keep you away from the evening service. You are too hard a task-master to yourself. You might come home with me this afternoon."

"No," he answered, with a deeper solemnity of tone; "this day, of all others, I feel how unprofitable a servant I have been. I am thirty-three years of age to-day. I have lived out nearly the term of—"

"Cousin Mark!" cried Barry, petulantly, "I am weary of you being so good. I wish you would do something dreadfully wrong, just for a change."

"Barry!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, yes! Barry!" she repeated, mimicking his tone of astonishment; "you may say Barry twenty times, if you please, but I mean it. You are getting insufferably good, and I'm tired of it; and I should like you a great deal more if you did something bad that we had to forgive and pity you for. Don't you see that you are up a great deal higher than we are? Come down a step or two, and come home to tea."

Mark Fletcher's gaze had been fastened inquiringly upon the girl's changeable face, as she spoke with an assumed air of gaiety. When she finished by repeating her invitation, the tears again gathered in her eyes, and the colour deepened upon her cheeks, and mounted to her forehead. They were tokens of distress, which his quick and sensitive compassion for all trouble could not pass over.

"What ails you, Barry?" he asked, sitting down beside her, and laying his hand softly upon hers.

"Oh, cousin Mark!" she sobbed, breaking down for a minute under the gentleness of his touch and tone, "I don't know whatever is to become of us at home. The Devonshires have decided that it is of no use for my father to go over to New York with winter goods for them this season; and he did not go in the spring either. They are only paying him a third of his salary, and they intimated yesterday that they could not continue to pay that, for they are doing no business at all, and it is ruining them, they say, to keep up their staff of clerks and travellers. They say there is no probability of their wanting him again before the war is over, for he has always managed their American trade; and who can tell how long the war may last? He may be an old man by that time; too old for voyages and journeys like those he has been used to. And I don't know whatever we shall do—Mab, and the boys, and me—"

Her voice lost itself in choking sobs, and she bowed down her head, and hid her face upon Mark's hand, which still rested upon her own. The attitude was one of utter and almost childish familiarity and trust, and his heart throbbed quickly as he felt her

tears falling fast upon his hand; but he neither spoke nor moved for some minutes. Then he bent down his head nearer to her ear, and whispered such words of consolation, and courage, and hope, as were suggested by his refined and highly spiritual temperament. Before long her sobs ceased, and she lifted up her tear-stained face, with a smile flickering upon it; seeing which he roused himself up with a half-suppressed sigh, and said in a tone of singular tenderness, "I will go home with you to-day, Barry."

HOW FAR OFF IS THE SUN?

BY EDWIN DUNKIN, F.R.A.S., OF THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY.

DR. HOOKER, in his address to the British Association at Norwich, has remarked, that "while fully admitting, and proudly as every scientific man ought, that astronomy is the most certain in its methods and results of all sciences, that she has called forth some of the highest efforts of the intellect, and that her results far transcend in grandeur those of any other science, I think we may hesitate before we therefore admit her queenship, her perfection, or her sole claims to interpretation and to prophecy. . . . No science is really perfect: certainly not that which lately erred two millions of miles in so fundamental a datum as the earth's distance from the sun." When thoughtful expressions of this nature come from one of our leading philosophers, similar feelings may naturally be supposed to be held by others less gifted in scientific knowledge, and who are not conversant with the details of astronomical investigations. It is true that modern researches have shown that the hitherto received value of the sun's distance ought to be considerably modified, but at the same time we may remark that the authoritative decrease adopted recently is owing more to a want of absolute perfection in astronomical observations, or to a defect of judgment employed in the discussion of the results, than to any failure in the theories of astronomy. Let us now see what is the angular measure of the quantity which represents the three or four millions of miles of the sun's distance which astronomers have found necessary to take away from the recognised value of the last forty years. Why, just three-tenths of a second of arc, equal to the apparent breadth of a human hair viewed at a distance of 125 feet. But, very recently, it has been satisfactorily proved that even this difference has arisen from a probable misinterpretation, by M. Encke, of the real phenomenon observed at some of the stations during the transit of Venus over the sun's disk, on June 3, 1769.

The Astronomer Royal has stated that the measurement of the sun's distance has always been considered the noblest problem in astronomy. He says, "It is easy to measure a base line a few miles long upon this earth, and easy to make a few geodetic surveys, and easy to infer from them the dimensions of the earth with great accuracy; and taking these dimensions as a base common to every subsequent measure, it is easy to measure the distance of the moon with trifling uncertainty. But the measure of the moon's distance in no degree aids in the measure of the sun's distance, which must be undertaken as a totally independent operation. A second reason is that, in whatever way we attack the problem, it will require all our care and all our ingenuity, as well as the application of almost all our knowledge of the antecedent facts of astronomy, to give the smallest

chance of an accurate result. A third reason is, that upon this measure depends every measure in astronomy beyond the moon; the distance and dimensions of the sun and every planet and satellite, and the distances of those stars whose parallaxes are approximately known." Until this normal astronomical unit is established, every planetary or stellar distance is only known as a proportional one, the distance of the sun from the earth being represented as unity. But although the problem is one of the most attractive in astronomy, yet none is more difficult to be solved practically, as may be proved by the attempts made by astronomers of all ages, from the days of Hipparchus down to the present time. We believe that many readers of the "Leisure Hour" will feel an interest in knowing what data are used in the determination of this fundamental constant in astronomy: we shall therefore offer a few brief remarks, keeping as free as possible from the abstruse part of the question, or indeed from any of the details of the observations themselves.

There are several methods by which the distance of the sun may be obtained, some of which are of too technical a character for these pages. The most important is the observation of the time of transit of Venus across the sun's disk simultaneously in different parts of the globe. Another method, and a most valuable one it is, is the determination of the distance of Mars when he is in closest proximity to the earth, from which indirectly that of the sun can be obtained. Very few readers of the "Leisure Hour" are unacquainted with the voyages of the great circumnavigator Captain Cook, but there are very few probably who are aware that one of the principal objects for which his first expedition was sent to the Pacific was to observe the times of the ingress and egress of the planet Venus at her transit over the solar disk, for the purpose of determining, in combination with corresponding observations at other places, the distance of the sun from the earth. This phenomenon occurs very rarely. There are always two transits at an interval of eight years, and then more than a hundred years must pass away before another can take place. One occurred in 1761, when Dr. Maskelyne, afterwards Astronomer Royal, was specially sent to St. Helena, Messrs. Mason and Dixon to the Cape of Good Hope, M. Pingré, a French astronomer, to the island of Rodriguez in the Indian Ocean, l'Abbé Chappe to Tobolsk, in Siberia, and M. Rumowski to Selinghinsk, on the Mongolian frontier. Observations were also made in many other places with all the care and nicety which circumstances permitted. The results of the observations of the transit of 1761 were not so accordant as was desired. Preparations were therefore soon commenced for an expedition to the South Seas, under the auspices of the British Government, the first object being the observation of the next transit of Venus in 1769 from some favourable position in the South Pacific Ocean. The command was entrusted to Lieutenant James Cook. Other expeditions were formed for the same purpose. Successful observations of the ingress and egress were made at Otaheite, by Cook, Green, and Solander; at Fort Prince of Wales, Hudson's Bay, by Wales and Dymond; at St. Joseph, in California, by Chappe, Doz, Medina, and Pauly; at Kola, in Lapland, by Rumowski; and at Wardöe, an island in the Arctic Ocean at the north-eastern extremity of Norway, by Hell, Sajnovics, and Borgrewing. All the observations were immediately discussed by some

of the principal mathematicians in Europe, especially by Lalande, who collected the chief observations and published them as a whole in a treatise on the subject. The results were generally accordant, and gave, according to Planmann, $8''.43$ as the value of the "horizontal equatorial solar parallax," or the angle subtended by the semi-diameter of the earth at the mean distance of the sun.* Pingré's calculations gave $8''.81$, Euler's $8''.82$, Hornsby's $8''.78$, Lalande's $8''.50$, Lexell's $8''.68$, Smith's $8''.61$, and Maskelyne's $8''.72$. The reader is here reminded that by the knowledge of these numbers and of the diameter of the earth in miles, a simple trigonometrical calculation is all that is required to find how far the sun is from us. In 1822 and 1824, M. Encke, a celebrated German astronomer, published two elaborate treatises on this subject, the first containing an ample scrutiny of the observations of 1761, and the second a thorough critical investigation of the transit of 1769. His definitive result for the solar parallax was $8''.578$. This value was at once accepted by astronomers of all countries as giving the best data in existence for the determination of the sun's distance. Hence the numbers 95,300,000 miles came into general use.

In 1857, the Astronomer Royal gave an oral account of the necessity of making early preliminary arrangements for the proper observation of the approaching transits of Venus, which will take place in 1874 and 1882. He took that opportunity of drawing attention to the favourable position of Mars in the heavens in 1860 and 1862, for the determination of a new value of the sun's distance. The great solar eclipse of 1860 interfered in some measure with the observations in that year, but in 1862 an extensive series was made both in the northern and southern hemispheres, from which a value of solar parallax, greatly in excess of Encke's, has been deduced by several astronomers independently. M. Le Verrier, who had been previously engaged in the formation of new solar and planetary tables, also found that the respective theories required that astronomical constant to be much increased. M. Foucault, from experiments on the velocity of light, also found the same thing, and lastly, M. Hansen, in discussing the lunar theory, discovered that a similar increase was required to satisfy the observations. Here we have four independent investigations by different methods, all giving a similar result, and each diminishing the distance of the sun about four millions of miles from that determined by Encke from the transit of Venus. With such strong evidence in its favour, astronomers could not avoid using the new value in their calculations. But although it has been adopted in most countries, yet there has always been some amount of uncertainty as to the propriety of the change, for the transit of Venus over the sun's disk is acknowledged by every one as superior to all other methods for the determination of the sun's distance, and the elaborate

research of M. Encke has been generally looked upon as a classic production. A re-discussion of the observations of 1769, by Mr. Stone, F.R.S., has, however, completely removed any uncertainty on this account, for by the treatment of the phenomena observed by an interpretation strictly according to the original remarks of the different observers, the true value of the solar parallax, deduced from the transit of Venus in 1769, is found to be $8''.91$, or $0''.33$ in excess of that previously determined.

M. Encke and Mr. Stone had precisely the same materials to work upon, but the former has assumed that the same kind of phenomenon was observed by all the astronomers, and that where any disagreement between the times of the observations at the various stations took place, the cause was supposed to arise from a personal error made by the observer. Mr. Stone, however, has considered that the observations as they stand are correct, for although they show occasional anomalies difficult to explain at first, yet by strictly following the remarks of the observers the apparent discrepancies disappear. In the accounts of the various observers, the manner of observation is generally mentioned, and sketches of the phenomenon observed are given. As an illustration of one of these remarks we make a brief extract from the account of Cook:—"The first appearance of Venus on the sun was certainly only a penumbra, till several seconds after, and then it appeared as in figure 4 (in Phil. Trans.); this appearance was observed both by Mr. Green and me; but the time it happened was not noted by either of us: it appeared to me very difficult to judge precisely of the times that the internal contacts of the body of Venus happened, by reason of the darkness of the penumbra at the sun's limb, it being there nearly, if not quite, as dark as the planet." It is difficult to decide exactly what part of the phenomenon Cook and Green really observed, and the same doubt exists in the remarks of some of the observers at other stations. In all cases the times recorded at the ingress and egress were either when the edges of the sun and planet were in contact, or when a dark ligament between the edges of the two bodies, usually called "the black-drop," was suddenly broken a few seconds after the internal contact of the edges at the ingress, or formed a few seconds before the internal contact at the egress.* It is in the interpretation of the meaning of the observers' remarks as to which of the two phenomena was observed where M. Encke and Mr. Stone differ. The opinion of those qualified to judge of the question has been given in favour of Mr. Stone's interpretation of the kind of phenomenon observed at each station, and his result will probably take the place of that of Encke, as the only true value given by a proper discussion of the observations of the transit of Venus of June 3rd, 1769. In addition to Mr. Stone's new value $8''.91$ for the solar parallax, M. Le Verrier, from the theories of the

* *Parallax* is the apparent change in the position of an object due to a change in the position of the observer. In celestial objects, it is the angle under which a line drawn from the station of the observer to the centre of the earth would appear at the object observed. Parallax is always the greatest when the object is in the horizon, where it is called the horizontal parallax, diminishing gradually to the zenith, where it is nothing. It is, however, only appreciable in the sun, moon, planets, and comets, the fixed stars being far too distant to be sensibly affected by it, even if the position of the observer be changed from the north to the south pole. The observations of the transits of Venus of 1761 and 1769 consisted chiefly in noticing the part of the solar disk traversed by the planet, as viewed from localities widely separated on the earth's surface, in order to obtain the different amounts of displacement in the position of the planet produced from the effects of parallax. A knowledge of this displacement gives an accurate value of the distance of Venus from the earth, from which it is very easy to infer indirectly that of the sun.

* During the transit of Mercury over the sun's disk on the morning of November 5, 1883, the formation of the "black-drop," preceding the apparent internal contact of the limbs or edges of the sun and planet at the egress, was very satisfactorily observed at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. In the telescope of the great equatorial, the phenomenon was first seen as a thin dark filament, stretching across the bright space between the limbs of the two bodies. In telescopes of lower power, its first appearance was indicated by the planet assuming an elongated or pear shape, tapering almost to a point at the sun's edge. The time of the true contact of the limbs was the moment of the formation of the dark filament, although the apparent contact took place several seconds after. This curious phenomenon, which is evidently caused by the great irradiation, or spreading out, of the light of the sun's limb, was witnessed by the writer and five other skilled observers.

apparent movements of the sun and planets, has deduced 8''·92, and MM. Hansen and Stone, from the lunar theory, 8''·92 and 8''·85 respectively. From corresponding observations of Mars, made in the autumn of 1862 in the northern and southern hemispheres, independent values have been obtained by MM. Winnecke, Stone, and Newcomb, which differ but slightly from each other. M. Foucault also, from his experiments on the velocity of light, gave a similar result. The mean of all the values is 8''·90, which is the angular measure of one-half of the diameter of the earth viewed from the average distance of the sun. Using 8''·90, the adopted quantity, we find that this average distance is 91,954,000 miles, or in round numbers ninety-two millions of miles. The agreement between the eight independent values is most remarkable, and it exhibits clearly that astronomy may still fairly be considered the most exact of the sciences, at least so far as its "queenship" is affected by the different investigations on the sun's distance.

The approaching transit of Venus over the sun's disk on December 8, 1874, will be most favourably observed, at the ingress, from the Sandwich Islands for the northern station, and from the islands of Mauritius and Rodriguez in the Indian Ocean for the southern stations. At the egress, the northern station must be situated in the south-eastern part of European Russia between Odessa and the Caspian Sea, and that in the southern hemisphere on the western coast of New Zealand in the provinces of Canterbury or Wellington. Preliminary arrangements are already being made for the selection of stations for the erection of temporary observatories, and for determining their accurate longitude.

THE WINTER POST ACROSS THE ST. GOTTHARD.*

As early as the middle of September, the varied and active life which has enlivened the Pass of St. Gotthard during the short summer months, begins to decrease. In the middle of October the first snow falls on the hard frozen ground at the top of the pass, and lays the foundation for the elevated sledge road which is afterwards made. The rain which falls in the valleys becomes snow on the heights. The white shroud of snow gradually works its way down into the valley, and the pass is shut up for wheeled conveyances. But the post still continues to run through the valley of Altdorf as far as Amsteg, as this route is sometimes free from snow through the whole winter. The one-horse carriages, now made with two seats, await the post at Amsteg, or on the other side of the mountain, at Airolo. The travellers are wrapped up in buffalo cloaks, and covered as carefully as possible with warm rugs reaching up to the waist. All the letterbags, packages, and other goods are piled into the sledges, while the great heavy post-carriage remains by the side of the road, unprotected and unprotected.

The postilion takes his seat in the first sledge, the conductor in the second, and these lead the way, to watch over the safety of the caravan. The trusty sure-footed horses in the other sledges follow without guidance. If a horse shows signs of fatigue, the travellers keep it up to its work with showers of

snowballs. After a fall of snow the "rutners," guides, or pioneers, set off several hours before the post with great sledges, to which ten or twelve oxen are yoked, one behind the other, to order to open a road sufficiently wide for the post sledges.

The work of the "rutners" is as laborious as it is dangerous, and is divided into two portions. The first consists in marking out the path. The object of this is to cut the first track in the snow after a very heavy fall. A dozen strong surefooted oxen lead the way, drawing the sledge behind them. They are followed by ten or twelve sturdy guides, strong hardy fellows dressed in high boots or closely-woven over-socks, woollen gloves, and fur caps well provided with ear-lappets, who are busily occupied in shovelling out the first track through the snow. Behind them come a company of the "weger," or road-makers, the chief road-maker at their head, who widen the road already traced out, and make it fit for driving upon. The confederation pays an annual sum of fifty or sixty thousand francs (£2,000) for the maintenance of the road. The guides are appointed by the government of the district, and the road-makers are under the direction of the landlord of the hospice. Many of them live for weeks together in huts in the Tremola valley, subsisting on a scanty fare of dry bread and smoked meat, like the exiles of Siberia during the hardships of winter. Their weekly salary is very low, considering the great labours and dangers of their calling.

The rutners of the St. Gotthard do not so often lose their lives as those on some of the less known passes, though such cases have been heard of. The fearless mountaineers know every corner of the St. Gotthard as well as their own rooms at home. They can distinguish every sign of a change of weather, particularly of the dreaded snowstorm; and by a most extraordinary foreboding, are able to avoid the avalanche. For this reason the drivers, postilions, and cattle-drivers pay great attention to the opinion and warnings of the rutners; and accidents happen only when, through carelessness or obstinacy, these warnings are neglected. When the post has reached the top of the pass, and the men and horses have refreshed themselves in the post-house, they set off down the mountain with the rapidity of lightning, shouting and hallooing in spite of the cutting winter blast, turning the corners very quickly, to avoid slipping over the edge. The chase is so wild and swift that travellers who are not accustomed to such speed almost lose their sight and hearing. Sometimes, when the snow is hard, the whole caravan slides straight down the line of road. The sledges are seldom overturned, and accidents of this kind are often followed by no worse consequences than fright. But those parts of the road which lead by the edge of precipices are sometimes dangerous. The snow bulges out in overhanging masses, which, like gigantic eaves, stretch far beyond solid ground. But should any driver or horse-leader, not well acquainted with the mountain, choose the apparently more convenient path leading close by the edge, not suspecting that he has no ground beneath his feet, his weight may cause the immediate fall of such a snow-ledge, which, like a chalk cliff, has stood through the whole winter, and horse and rider may be buried in the abyss.

The delights, and also the perils of the winter post on the St. Gotthard are manifold and extreme. First, there is the charming view of the mountain

* From the German of Auguste Fieberabend, in "Daheim."

region, particularly the valley of Ursern, in the brilliancy of a clear winter day or moonlit night. Mountain and valley are enveloped in the same white shroud of sleeping nature. The peaks and outposts of the mountains have lost their peculiar forms, and have acquired the soft and smooth outlines of winter. The rushing and gurgling streams below are silent; the brooks are covered with ice, and the waterfalls which glide down the steep rocks in summer, dashing about in spray, are now frozen into ice cones and pillars, and hang from the cold rocky wall like robes of gleaming white. The dark mysterious Alpine lake lies under its covering of ice and snow, like a dead man under a shroud. But when a warm day is followed by a cold night, this universal covering of snow becomes as hard and solid as ice, glittering in the rays of the winter sun with myriads of dazzling crystals. The soft flaky covering of the fresh-fallen mountain snow has become a shining coat of mail, from the midst of which the silent mountain giants rise in exalted majesty, standing out in glorious contrast against the cloudless blue of heaven. Perfect silence reigns around, broken only by the crack of the postilion's whip, and the ringing of the horse-bells. The lovely Alpine plants are hidden under the snow. The marmot, or "munke," as it is called in the Ursern valley, and the Alpine shrew-mouse, rest in their long winter sleep. On the banks of the Reuss, or by the skirts of the wood, the blackbird and the snowfinch pipe their shrill notes, and the hedge sparrow trills his clear song, while the frightened heathcock rises in heavy flight. All their feathered representatives on the Alpine heights are silent; the snow-white Alpine hare lies as still as death beneath the snow; while the proud eagle or the powerful "Lämmergeier" wheels in huge circles, high up in the clear winter air, or hovers quietly over the highest mountain peaks. At night, the hungry fox howls in the bushes, and often wanders long distances over the hardened snow, seeking for prey, accompanied by the snow-white weasel, and at times even by the blood-thirsty lynx.

When the post sledge rushes through this gleaming and glittering landscape, between snow walls piled up to the height of ten or fifteen feet, a sharp blast of wind often whirls up from the snow-covered valley, millions of ice crystals and flakes of snow, scattering them over a large extent of ground. When such a blast sweeps the snow from the high mountain ridges, clouds of snow are produced, and the inhabitants are in the habit of saying, "The mountain smokes." Part of this snow dust rises upwards in glittering diamond clouds, while the heavier masses, driven on by the wind, hover round the rocky walls of the mountain summits in a hundred whirling snow clouds, and at last sink down into the abyss in long streaks of mist. One of the ever-memorable joys which attend the winter journey over the St. Gotthard, is the arrival at the hospice, particularly when a cold cutting wind fills the air with sharp fine-pointed snow and ice crystals, which prick the skin and make it tingle. This joy is heightened when the passage has been attended with dangers and sufferings such as we shall describe. It was formerly a rich delight to the traveller to receive the greeting of the honest old landlord Lombardi, whose useful life came to an end a few years ago. A short notice of this memorable man must not be omitted in any description of the St. Gotthard.

Felix Lombardi was the child of poor parents, and was born at Valle, near Airolo, in the Livienthal.

He lost his father when he was seven years old, and two years afterwards he was obliged to go out into the wide world as a shepherd boy. He entered the service of a peasant at Bergamo, and remained with him three years, in spite of poor nourishment and scanty clothing. He then returned home with torn clothes, and poor both in body and mind. He remained three years with his mother, working hard in summer as a chamois hunter, in winter as a sledge-driver. Weary of his laborious and dangerous life, he resolved, when scarcely sixteen years old, to go into Lombardy, and if possible to learn a trade. With a few cents in his pocket, he made his way to Milan, and apprenticed himself to a tailor who worked for the French army. Here he remained four years, and industriously employed his leisure hours in learning to read and write. As he could not pay any money for his apprenticeship, he was obliged afterwards to earn the requisite sum. After four years, he returned to his native canton of Tessin, and settled in Bellinzona. He became the driver of the post over the St. Gotthard, and afterwards along the road from Airolo to Chiasso. He continued this arduous labour for twenty-three years, to the full satisfaction of travellers, as well as of his employers. At that time the post crossed the mountain only twice a week. Lombardi employed the rest of his time in tailoring. In the year 1828, he erected the first brewery in Bellinzona, and in 1835 was elected a member of the great council. In the year 1839 he undertook the important office of vice-inspector of finance, and in the following year that of inspector of the trade over the St. Gotthard. A year afterwards, the government of his native canton appointed him to be director of the hospice on the St. Gotthard. Here he was quite in his element, and for more than twenty-two years, till the end of his life, he lived at that inhospitable height through summer and winter, labouring with untiring devotion and zeal as the father of the poor and needy. Under his direction the hospice was so greatly enlarged, that it will now shelter ten times as many travellers as before. The benevolent look of the old man's large beaming eyes will be forgotten by no traveller who has ever entered the hospitable precincts of the hospice. Lombardi knew the mountain in all its changes of weather and its varied phases as perhaps no other man has done, and he thoroughly understood the most efficacious means of restoring the half-frozen and unconscious travellers who reached the hospice in the coldest and roughest weather. Immediately after their arrival, he led them up and down in a cold room, and gave them some warm red wine or weak grog. Then the frozen parts of their bodies were dipped in snow-water, and rubbed with snow. When free circulation had been restored, the sufferers were brought into a warm room, carefully covered up with woollen rugs, and provided with needful food. This custom is still adhered to. A deep sleep usually follows, which often lasts twenty-four hours. On awakening, the travellers are generally sufficiently recovered to partake of a hearty repast and to resume their journey.

But the sufferings and dangers of the winter post are as diverse and manifold as its pleasures. Among them is the fearful snowstorm (called the "guxeten" by the Germans, and the *tourmenta*, or "tormenta," by the Swiss). The mountain snow differs in form, as well as in thickness and specific gravity, from the star-shaped snow-flakes on the lower heights and

CROSSING THE ST. GOTTHARD IN WINTER.



in the valleys. It is quite floury, dry, and sandy, and therefore very light. When viewed through a microscope it assumes at times the form of little prismatic needles, at other times that of innumerable small six-sided pyramids, from which, as from the morning star, little points jut out on all sides, and which, driven by the wind, cut through the air with great speed. With this fine ice-dust of the mountain snow, the wind drives its wild game through the clefts of the high Alps and over the passes, particularly that of St. Gotthard. Suddenly it tears up a few hundred thousand cubic feet of this snow, and whirls it up high into the air, leaving it then to the mercy of the upper current, either to fall to the ground again in the form of the thickest snow-storm, or to be dispersed at will like glittering ice crystals. At times the wind sweeps up large tracks of the dry ice-dust, and pours them down upon a deep-lying valley amidst the mountains, or on to the summit of the passes, obliterating in a few seconds the laboriously excavated mountain road, at which a whole company of rutners have toiled for days. All these appearances resemble the avalanches of other Alps, but cannot be regarded in the same light as the true snowstorm, the tormenta or guxeten. This is incomparably more severe, and hundreds on hundreds of lives have fallen sacrifices to its fury. These have mostly been travelling strangers, who either did not distinguish the signs of the coming storm, or, in proud reliance on their own power, refused to listen to well-meant warnings, and continued their route.

Experience has proved that snowstorms are the most frequent and most severe at the top of the pass, and on the south side of the Tremola valley, most especially on the south side when a north wind prevails, and on the north under a prevailing south wind. The "rutner," and drivers, and the inhabitants of the hospice, are well acquainted with all the signs which herald the coming storm. Among these are the uniform yellowish tint of the horizon, and the gradually darkening mist, which gathers round the mountain tops and makes them invisible. The air is icy cold, dry, and hard. Unbroken silence, like that which precedes the outburst of a fearful storm in summer, hovers over this desolate region. Man breathes heavily, and the horse snorts uneasily, while the trodden snow crackles under his feet. As the threatening storm approaches, the nearer mountain summits envelope themselves in grey clouds. There is still time, if the distance is not too great, to reach the sheltering hospice, or the nearest cantoniera, or place of shelter. The sky becomes darker and darker, as if evening had at once succeeded to mid-day. Suddenly a sharp gust of wind terrifies the alarmed traveller, dashing a handful of snow into his face. Then all is silent as before. This phenomenon repeats itself from time to time, at gradually lessening intervals. This is the last warning for a speedy flight. A peculiar mysterious sound is heard among the rocky gorges, at first low and moaning, coming from the opposite side, then gradually clearer and stronger, echoing again from the far mountain regions, as if distant voices were calling for help. These air-piercing cries now penetrate from a second, third, fourth quarter, monotonous and hollow, quite different from the sound of the wind in the valleys. The horse in the sledge snorts uneasily, digs his hoofs with greater force into the weak and yielding snow, and puts a double strain on his energies to

reach the nearest place of refuge before the coming storm. A deep solemn murmur is now added to the shrill cries. The gusts of wind increase in violence, and an ever wilder tumult rages through the air. In a few minutes the thick snow clouds, which surround the affrighted traveller, disburden themselves of their superfluous contents, and send down a shower of ice-arrows, sharp as needle-points, with such violence that the uncovered parts of the body are struck in a most painful manner. It is in vain for the overtaken traveller to turn his back towards the point from which the wind brings the thick masses. Like troubled waves of the sea, the floods of ice-needles close over him, and, in their whirling course, attack him from the front. If the fearful storm abates its fury for an instant, and he can open his eyes and glance around, he can see no trace of the road which he has been following. He stands knee-deep, in the mass of fresh-fallen or drifted snow. The wall of snow by the side of the road, which is ten or fifteen feet high, and the posts, which often reach the height of twenty or thirty feet, are but insufficient guides. These often disappear entirely beneath the mass of drifted snow. The poor wanderer feels with horror that his ears, nose, hands, and feet, have become numb and motionless, stiff and frozen. An irresistible feeling of weakness and drowsiness, with a gradual bewilderment of his senses, overwhelm him, and he falls helplessly into the arms of death.

Almost every year adds a large number of victims to the list of those who have fallen a prey to the snowstorm. One single touching example will suffice. On the morning of the 10th of April, 1848, the Italian post had been considerably delayed, in consequence of a heavy snow-fall on the previous night, and it was impossible to go beyond Andermatt. The brave and powerful post driver, Simmen, resolved to have the post-bag and other luggage conveyed over the St. Gotthard by porters. Among these porters was John Joseph Reglin, a stonemason by trade. As the caravan left Andermatt, the snow was still falling in thick masses, and the wind raged wildly around. But the hardy mountaineers did not allow themselves to be arrested in their course, and pressed boldly onwards. They had already accomplished three-quarters of the distance between Andermatt and the hospice, when a snowstorm broke out over the Lucendro Alp with such violence that in a few minutes the road was quite swept away, and every trace of it was obliterated. The raging storm, with its sharp ice-needles, beat like a scorpion-scourge upon the faces of the devoted men. But they still held on their way. But when they had reached the top of the pass, Reglin was not able to proceed. His comrades, though heavily laden, laboured to drag him with them through the snow, which was now more than three feet high. Yet their strength began to fail, and the only course which remained was either to forsake their companion, or to give themselves up to certain death with him. With heavy hearts they chose the first course. They therefore wrapped up Reglin in a cloak and woollen rug, brought him under the shelter of a protecting rock, left the post-bags and luggage in a heap beside him, and endeavoured, if possible, to reach the hospice and obtain help there. This was only about half a mile distance from them. Yet these hardy mountaineers took an hour and a half in reaching the place of shelter. Immediately

on their arrival, Lombardi set out with a body of men to bring help, if possible, to the unfortunate Reglin. But they were too late. He was already covered with snow, so that it was difficult to find him, and when found he was frozen to death.

When these severe storms occur, the Italian post must often wait for days, sometimes on one side of the mountain, and sometimes on the other, until the path over the pass is open. Accidents to the post itself are of rare occurrence, because the rutner and postilions always pay special attention to the signs which precede a storm, and the post is stopped in time. One of these signs is the sudden restiveness and liveliness of the post-horses, usually so docile, and the restlessness of the dogs in the hospice, who begin to bark incessantly till they are let out. The mountain jackdaws fly swiftly from the rocky summits down to the hospice, and hover round it with evident uneasiness, uttering harsh cries. In these cases a snowstorm or avalanche may be predicted with certainty.

The avalanches, as well as the so-called "windschilde," threaten the winter post with manifold and great dangers. A distinction is made among mountaineers between "drift" and "ground" avalanches. The first take place in winter, when loose fresh snow falls on the frozen surface of the steep mountain slopes. This snow, finding no firm resting-place here, rushes down into the valley in enormous masses, and with a fearful crash. An extraordinary pressure of the air always precedes these dust avalanches, which spread themselves over a wide extent of ground, tearing up whole forests and solid buildings like card houses, and carrying many hundredweight of goods like feathers through the air. The ground avalanches, on the other hand, occur chiefly in spring time during a thaw. At this time the air echoes almost continuously with the majestic thunder of the avalanches, which dash down into the valley from all sides. "Windschilde," also called *staublaunen*, form after a heavy fall of snow on the mountain outposts, or amid the rocky clefts; while out of the thick half-frozen masses rise high snow walls, quite detached from the rock, which weigh many hundredweight; and at last, either pressed downward by their own bulk, or affected by a thaw or a change in the direction of the wind, detach themselves, and fall with a loud crash. It is to these that the affrighted glance of the traveller is chiefly directed when passing through the mountain gorges. The sound of a bell, the crack of a pistol or a whip, even a loud call, is said to suffice to set some of these avalanches in violent motion. The drivers therefore muffle up the horse-bells, and creep silently through the road of terror, and across the dreaded snow-fields.

History and the oral tradition of the mountains record many instances of accidents which have been occasioned by the fall of avalanches.

During the Bellinzona war in 1478, as the confederates, with a force of 10,000 men, were crossing the St. Gotthard, the men of Zurich were preceding the army as vanguard. They had just refreshed themselves with some wine, and were marching up the wild gorge, shouting and singing, in spite of the warnings of their guides. Then, in the heights above, an avalanche was suddenly loosened, which rushed down upon the road, and in its impetuous torrent buried sixty warriors far below in the Reuss, in full sight of those who were following.

On the 12th of March, 1848, in the so-called Planggen, above the tent of shelter at the Mätelli, thirteen men who were conveying the post were torn down by a violent avalanche into the bed of the Reuss with their horses and sledges. Three men, fathers of families, and nine horses were killed; the others were saved by hastily summoned help. But one of their deliverers, Joseph Muller, of Hospenthal, met a hero's death while engaged in the rescue. He had hastened to help his neighbours, but in the district called the "Harness," he and two others were overwhelmed by a second violent avalanche, and lost their lives. In the same year the post going up the mountain from Airolo was overtaken by an avalanche near the house of shelter at Ponte Tremola: a traveller from Bergamo was killed, the rest escaped.

History tells of a most striking rescue from an avalanche on the St. Gotthard. In the year 1628 Landamman Kaspar, of Brandenberg, the newly-chosen governor of Bellenz, was riding over the St. Gotthard from Zug, accompanied by his servant and a faithful dog. At the top of the pass he and his servant were buried by an avalanche, which descended from the Lucendro. The dog alone shook himself free. His first care was to extricate his master. But when he saw that he could not succeed in doing this, he hastened back to the hospice, and there, by pitiful howling and whining, announced that an accident had happened. The landlord and his servants set out immediately with shovels and pickaxes, and followed the dog, which ran quickly before them. They soon reached the place where the avalanche had fallen. Here the faithful dog stopped suddenly, plunged his face into the snow, and began to scratch it up, barking and whining. The men set to work at once, and after a long and difficult labour, succeeded in extricating the Landamman, and soon afterwards his servant. They were both alive, after spending thirty-six fearful hours beneath the snow, oppressed by the most painful thoughts. They had heard the howling and barking of the dog quite plainly; and had noticed his sudden departure, and the arrival of their deliverers; they had heard them talking and working, without being able to move or utter a sound. The Landamman's will ordained that an image of the faithful dog should be sculptured at his feet on his tomb. This monument was seen till lately in St. Oswald's Church at Zug.

The disturbance of the air arising from the fall of one avalanche often occasions that of many more, so that a long-continued fall often takes place. This happened in the spring of 1854, where, on the shady side of the Realperthal, over an extent of ground covering more than three miles, one mass of snow after another was set in motion by the pressure of the air arising from the fall of former avalanches. The thunder of their fall lasted for hours without interruption, and all the roads were filled up with heavy masses of snow, so that paths had to be dug through them, in order to restore necessary communication. The avalanches had fallen on places where they had never been known before. The spring avalanches generally follow their accustomed track in descending into the valley. But if their mass is unusually large and blocks up the road, the "rutner" dig out subterranean channels, through which the post sledges often drive for a long time. Should the post road be thus blocked up by an avalanche, or filled up and obliterated by an un-

usually heavy fall of snow, the post sledge must often wait for a whole day, and even longer, before it can resume its journey. So at Christmas in 1859 four post drivers were compelled to wait four days at the hospice on St. Gotthard, till the Tremola valley was again opened. And communication was stopped for a longer time in January, 1863, after the unusually severe snowstorm which then took

place. After this storm the snow was three or four yards high in the Tremola valley, and the first storey of the houses, and many whole huts, were buried beneath it. Ninety-three men, and many cows, sheep, and goats, were killed, and forty-one houses and many sheds destroyed. Such are some of the results of the fearful reign of winter along the Pass of St. Gotthard.

The New Year.

ONCE again the Old Year passes, but ere dawning lights the plain,

Or the morning star is risen, lo! the New Year comes again.

As a shadow on the waters, as a wind upon the grass,

Oh, the fleeting, flying years—how they pass! how they pass!

Yes, they pass, and we pass with them, for the tide of time is strong,

As it sweeps us from the places we have loved so well and long;

And we gaze upon the losses of our life, and sadly say,

"How the old beloved times pass away—pass away!"

Shall we ever vainly mourn with a trouble in our mind,

And a longing for the old scenes we have left so far behind?

And an eager wistful scanning of the present we have made,

Sighing sadly o'er its hopes, "How they fade—how they fade!"

There is snow upon the hedges, and there's ice upon the stream;

On the eaves the hanging icicles show grey in twilight's gleam;

Some crumpled leaves are freezing to the noon-thaw on the stone,

And the owl hoots through the forest, all alone—all alone.

But see, in the high heaven how the stars are shining fair,

Brilliant night lamps in blue vaulting, and the Power that placed them there

Has the measure and the meaning of all change within His sight,

And in pity for our darkness, gives us light—gives us light!

Yet a little, and the winters, with their bitter, biting cold,

Yet a little, and the swift years, ever changing new to old,

Both shall cease them. Then the patient, and the truthful, and the meek,

Shall possess what we in earth-life vainly seek—vainly seek.

Though the fig-tree shall not blossom, nor the vine with fruit be found;

Though the olive-tree be withered, and a famine blight the ground;

Though the flocks and herds untended die upon the poisoned plains;

Yet the Great Eternal God, He remains—He remains.

He has told us of His kingdom in the heavens high above,

And we bless Him for His mercy, and we trust Him for His love;

And we look on, past our trial, to the place of Blissful Peace,

Where the new Eternal Life will not cease—will not cease.

A. N.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY.

THE theory of the common law of England is that a married woman has *no legal existence*. Of course it follows that she has no property, for a being who does not exist cannot possess anything, cannot act,—we wish we could add, cannot suffer. But though human law is often full of fictions and monstrosities, the great realities of human life constantly oppose them, and the very minds that originate mistaken laws cannot resist the outcry of nature against their results. Anomalous inroads have thus been made upon this theory from time to time. When a woman was found to be cruelly ill-treated by her husband, her existence must be recognised so far as to punish him. She had a right also, in common with her children, to claim support from him; a right, however, which to this day is ill-defined, and often difficult to be enforced. In some other points also a more humane spirit has gradually become manifest.

But the influence of civilised ideas, and the better appreciation of the effect which the precepts of Christianity should have upon the daily life, have carried the majority of educated men far beyond the narrow limits of these ameliorations of the law. Such men feel that the golden rule is at the least as binding upon them with regard to their wives as with regard to others, and that all the claims of duty and affection are superadded. We can look round, and see a larger number than ever before of women who

are in all things the partners of their husbands' minds, and hearts, and lives, and whom no short-sighted selfishness degrades from the position in which God placed them. But, carried away by this sight, we forget that the law remains the same, and that there are very many men in the lower classes, and, alas! not there only, who acknowledge no restraint or obligation but such as the law imposes. When we find, therefore, that the law recognises the ability of a married woman to suffer, and to be punished, but refuses to recognise her right to possess the smallest portion of anything whatever upon earth, we are not to suppose that it is a dead letter, because its action is not daily and violently obtruded before us. The sufferers are of a class peculiarly likely to endure in silence, and yet any one who is an observer of society can count cases of distress arising from this one source, equally numerous and melancholy.

Side by side with the common law, a system has grown up by which women of the upper classes to a great extent escape from its severity. The courts of equity admit certain arrangements previous to marriage, to provide a woman with a separate estate. By means of "marriage settlements," property can be placed in the hands of trustees, and the principal can then never be touched, either with or without the consent of the nominal owner. The *income* from this property, however, is but rarely secured so as to

be in the power of the wife. In most cases she has no power at all to retain it, even for the most necessary expenditure, if her husband pleases to take it from her.

It is plain that wholesale injustice of this kind is of itself an evil, even where no unkind feeling exists on the part of the husband, in whose supposed interest the arrangement is made. The individual into whose hands is committed the management of the household, who must guide and direct its affairs, and practise all the economies needful for most persons, is yet pronounced incompetent to use wisely the very money she, perhaps, has earned. She who has the training of the immortal souls of her children is counted too ignorant to manage the property which has come to her by gift or inheritance, and which she is at least as likely to wish to improve for their sakes as her husband can be.

It seems strange that such a law has not been altered long ago; and it seems strange that its alteration could be opposed now.

There are some subjects respecting which the idea of change of any kind is displeasing. Associations and cherished feelings have grown up around them; and when errors and evils are pointed out in connection with them, we are apt to feel unwilling to attempt their removal, lest the sacred central object of our regard might suffer. Yet it is the part of wisdom to see whether married life does not suffer more by the toleration of these evils than by any agitation for their removal, for if the object be a worthy one it will be the gainer by the process.

In the recent discussions on the proposed alteration in the law regarding the property of married women, we have been urged, somewhat inconsequently, to remember the beauty and charm of an English home, and to say whether a finger of alteration ought to be laid upon anything connected with it. Of course there is a double mistake here, in taking for granted that this ideal home is the only type of married life in this country, and in taking for granted that its happiness is produced by the laws under which it is formed. Neither assumption is true. There are dwellings in which those who might have been the light of happy homes lead a life of distress and depression. And the peace and affection which fortunately characterise so many, are the results of religious and moral causes, not only not dependent upon, but partly antagonistic to, the legal sanction given to the claims of strength alone.

There are some who, rightly regarding the institution of marriage as of all earthly institutions the most sacred, forget that the legislative enactments as to the surroundings and legal accidents of marriage have no intrinsic sacredness whatever. The grounds upon which the latter must be judged are, first, their being in harmony with the marriage tie itself; second, their strict justice, and right-dealing with all interests concerned; third, their simplicity, both that they may be easily understood, and that they may interfere as little as possible with the ordinary progress of affairs. In all these points the present law fails.

(1) The marriage tie is founded on mutual affection, and it is wrong, as well as unhappy and unwise, to found it on anything else. Now the law strips one of the parties to the contract of everything she has in the world, and hands it over to the other's irresponsible possession. A wife ought certainly to be at liberty to give her property to her husband if she pleases; the evil lies in its being forcibly taken from her.

The necessary subordination of one who, nevertheless, has much power and responsibility, to the head of the household, does not in the least demand this abnegation of the common right of every human being. It is contrary to reason that a change of state professedly founded on affection should require, as a necessary element, the reducing of one of the parties to a condition of complete and irremediable helplessness. It would be far more in harmony with the ideal of the marriage union, that each person should retain all his and her powers and privileges unbroken, with only so much modification as is caused by their mutual affection, and by the assumption of protection on the one side, and consequent compliance on the other.

(2) As little is the present law consonant with justice. That property belonging to an individual, whether earned or inherited, should be used and controlled by that individual, is common sense as well as law. The cases are but few in which an invasion of this right is justifiable. An insane person, incapable of guiding his actions, may be temporarily deprived of the control of his property, but no one else is permitted to squander it. But even a criminal, with the exception of those convicted of the highest crimes, is not deprived of his private means. Has any reason ever been shown for placing every woman who marries in a worse position than either a madman or a criminal? It will be said, of course, that while others who are legally deprived are placed in the power of mere officials, women are placed in the power of presumably attached husbands. But the officials are responsible to efficient tribunals; there is no court of appeal for a woman if her husband fails in his solemnly-undertaken duties. Yet even if it were possible to punish a man for the misuse of his wife's property, it would still not have been proved right for him to be invested with it, *not* by the will of his wife, but by the strong hand of the law. The onus of proof lies upon those who assert that it is just to take from one person what is her own, and give it to another who did not earn or inherit it. It is alleged that as a man undertakes to support his wife, it is right that he should have possession of her property. But it must be remembered that in all classes except the highest (which is almost never left exposed to the full effect of the law), a woman gives as well as takes, quite irrespective of what property she may possess. She undertakes the active care of the household, the arranging for the daily requirements, the providing of all such necessities and comforts for her husband as their station in life permits, the care and management of children, the nursing of the sick,—these things under the best circumstances impose an anxious and constant task, and in many cases involve an enormous expenditure of moral and physical strength. Giving this, it cannot seem otherwise than unjust that her property should be demanded too.

(3) It might seem at first sight that the present law has the questionable merit of being simple in its wrong action. As it quietly divests a woman of everything she has, it would seem that whatever her troubles, there would be none regarding property. But it is not so. For the circuitous methods of evasion which have been devised, in order to prevent the sharper results of the law being felt by women who are blessed both with money and friends, often produce great complications. Parents and others, in their desire to protect

some beloved one in all contingencies, tie up their property with an intricacy which baffles and annoys all concerned. Even ordinary marriage settlements frequently prevent the most beneficial use being made of the money settled. And they are out of the reach, and out of the range of comprehension, of the largest class in society altogether. In all three points, therefore, the present law works ill. It is contrary to the spirit of a union founded on mutual affection—it is contrary to the principles of equity and justice—and where it permits any relief from its harsh provisions, it is complex, and fruitful of strife.

A *prima facie* case has therefore been made out for altering the law. Palliative measures have been tried, such as that which permits magistrates to give protective orders to women deserted by their husbands, in order that they may retain their own earnings; but this only affects one class of cases, and in a public manner, from which women of delicate feelings altogether shrink. These have proved insufficient, and the opinion is growing that the time has come when the theory of property in married life must be brought into harmony with the practice as it is among thoughtful, right-minded, and right-hearted men and women; in the hope that the alteration will induce a better practice among all.

A bill to amend the law, by giving married women the control of their own property, was introduced into the House of Commons on the 21st of April last, by Mr. G. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Mill, and Mr. Russell Gurney, Recorder of London. A number of petitions, signed by about 28,000 persons, were in a very short time presented in its favour. It was read a second time on the 10th of June, when the House was exactly divided, 123 voting for it, 123 against it, being carried by the casting vote of the speaker. The "Times" of June 12th remarked, "It is safe to infer from the 'tie' of Wednesday night that the tendency of opinion is in favour of reform. When as many votes are given for a 'revolutionary' innovation as can be produced on the other side, it is evident that the instinctive conservatism of society is giving way." It rather seems that our suggestion is the true one,—society (the best part of it) having altered its practice, is learning that to teach the rest to follow its example, it must alter the law to suit its practice.

The bill was referred to a select committee, some of the members of which were opponents of the measure. A considerable number of witnesses were examined before it—lawyers, English and American, magistrates, employers, and others; and just before the close of the session it presented a report strongly in favour of the principle of the bill. A great amount of evidence was given to show that the present law, notwithstanding the modes of relief which have gradually been legalised, often bears hardly even upon women of the higher classes; and that those of the lower classes, upon whom it presses with unmitigated force, suffer frequently and greatly from its action. The law of many of the States of America, and of Canada, has been altered on this point, at different times, within the last twenty-five years. Witnesses were therefore examined as to the results of this alteration, and they declared that they had been perfectly satisfactory, having effected a great change for the better in the status and in the comfort of women generally, without any evil consequences of any kind. Settlements continue to be made for wealthy women much as formerly, and the

practice does not interfere with the working of the general law. One of these witnesses was Mr. Cyrus Field, well known for his services in connection with the Atlantic Telegraph. His brother also, Mr. Dudley Field, the eminent American jurist, after giving a very full account of the changes on this subject, and their results in the State of New York, writes, "In conclusion, it is my belief that scarcely any one of the great reforms which have been effected in this state has given more satisfaction than this." The special report of the committee very truly remarks that, when contemplating a great change, it is both a guide and an encouragement to see that similar changes made in similar circumstances have worked well.

It should not be forgotten that men, especially those of the lower classes, will certainly benefit morally, and often materially, by the removal of the too large powers now placed in their hands. On this point the evidence of several of the witnesses was decisive. Men who have contracted habits of drinking, if they knew that when they had spent their own wages there was nothing between them and want, would be compelled to stop short, if any consideration could influence them. As it is, if their wives have anything, or are able to work, they count upon their means as a resource. A very significant fact was stated by Mr. Ormerod, president of the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers' Association. This co-operative society has been in existence for many years, and from the first it was laid down as a rule that married women were to be recognised as separate shareholders, and that the amount of their deposits was not to be paid to their husbands except on a written requisition, signed by the wife. Out of a membership of above 7,000, about 2,000 are married women. It has repeatedly happened that a man "out on the spree," having spent his own money, wanted to spend his wife's, and applied to the secretary of this association for the amount of her shares. He was of course refused, and left, vowing vengeance, and threatening law. But before he could do anything, or even earn a fee to give an attorney, he must be sober enough to think; and it has been the constant experience that when he was in his right senses again, he was very thankful that the family had not been stripped and starving during his debauch, and has given up his intention. It is a remarkable fact that, illegal to some extent as these rules of the society are, none of these men have ever actually brought them to the test of a court of law.

The proposed changes in the law would, as we see, affect earnings more than other property, the latter, if at all considerable, being protected by settlements already. It is evident that earnings (especially by persons who are understood to be supported by others) are signs of energy and industry on the part of the workers. Therefore to point to indolent or thriftless wives is no answer to the arguments of those who urge these changes. If they are in easy circumstances, they are sufficiently protected already; if poor, it is not *they* who are likely to earn anything to be protected.

There are two points which will require care in the readjustment of the law. It is proposed to give a married woman the power of suing and being sued. Those who enjoy property under marriage settlements have at present that power, to some extent. Limitations are found practicable in these cases, and can be used still. They are needful, for as women of all ranks are generally those who order what is

required for the household, it would be wrong to leave them exposed to be pursued for payment for what is used by the whole family. The committee think that this can be guarded against, however, by retaining the present obligation of a husband to provide for his wife and children, because in ordering household goods a wife is an agent for her husband, and "agency is a mixed question of law and fact, and the courts will give due weight to such a fact as the possession of property by a married woman without any express statutable direction."

The other point is as to the propriety of laying on married women a share of the legal obligation to support their children, which is now borne by the father. The amount of obligation borne by men now is very uncertain, and it seems as if there were no mode of enforcing it, except in the case of such desertion of children as leaves them chargeable to the parish. It is really almost wholly left to the influence of moral motives; and of all such motives can any be stronger than a mother's love? It would not be fair to place both parents on the same footing in this respect, because ordinarily the greater part of a man's time and strength is available for earning the support of himself and family, but the very reverse is the case with a woman. The multitudinous and exhausting demands upon the mother of young children, especially in the lower ranks, put it out of the power of such a one to make any effort for their support, except as the last resource of extreme poverty. Certainly, therefore, if a portion of this legal obligation is transferred to the mothers, it ought to be only in the case of ill-health, or unsoundness of mind, or other natural incapacity on the part of the fathers; or, in the case of wealthy women, according to some fixed rule, as to the proportion which their income bears to that of their husbands. Remembering, however, that even now, when no legal obligation on their part exists, large numbers of children are supported wholly by their mothers, it seems that it would be no great risk to leave their share of the duty to the operation of moral obligations alone. When the bill is reintroduced, as it will be, early next session, these points will receive careful attention, want of time alone having prevented their full examination by the committee.

There are a few people—we hope but few—who feel timid about entertaining the idea of change in present marriage arrangements, lest they should be taking an irreligious freedom in doing so. To them we must re-affirm, that divine and human laws are not synonymous, that the marriage union itself is formed under divine laws, but the effects of that union on property are settled by human laws. There is danger in affixing human traditions to divine institutions; for sceptics are not slow to take the traditionalists at their word, and assert that Scripture is thus opposed to the principles of natural justice. As Christians, therefore, we are bound to remove evils that may have gathered round that which we hold most sacred. Everything that tends to bring the details of daily life into harmony with the laws of God, both natural and revealed, is a triumph for Christianity, as well as a triumph for humanity.*

* We are indebted for this paper to Miss Tod, of Belfast, whose evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons last year attracted special attention. As the subject is important, and is likely soon to be before Parliament, it seems right to allow a fair statement from one who advocates legislative change. It is easy to indicate wrongs, but the difficulties of removing them by law are such as require careful consideration.

TWELFTH DAY AT THE FOUNDLING.

TWELFTH DAY, next to Christmas Day, is the red-letter festival at the Foundling Hospital. For the inmates are not cut off from the genial, happy influences of the season, homeless and deserted though they be. A few notes of what takes place in this palace-home for orphaned children may help to stimulate kind-hearted readers to do something to cheer the desolate and dreary dwellings of the unpatronised and unendowed poor. There is more to be gained by a visit to the Foundling than merely enjoyment of fine music.

On the 6th of January many visitors attend the morning service in the chapel, and afterwards visit the noble building to see the children take their dinner. First the boys march to their refectory, a long room lighted with many windows. On the panels between are lists of the annual benefactors, her Gracious Majesty, since her accession, always opening each year with a handsome donation. The room, ordinarily rather bare-looking, is festooned with long chains of evergreens and flowers suspended from the walls and ceiling, and bunches of shining green leaves decorate the windows and gaseliers, making the place look gay and cheerful. At the tap of a mallet the senior boys take their wind instruments and lead the grace before meat, which is sung reverently by the others, standing at their places beside the trestled tables covered with clean white cloths. Another tap of the mallet, and the boys sit down. Ordinarily the fare consists of beef, or mutton, or soup, or boiled rice and milk, according to the day of the week. But on Christmas Day a large piece of excellent plum-pudding, flanked by two golden oranges, constitutes the meal; while on Twelfth Day, next each plate is placed a small twelfth cake, duly encrusted with sugar and ornamented with birds, animals, and flowers. Immense pieces of beef are cut up on tin platters by the nurses, and each boy is served with an ample ration of meat, and potatoes *en robe de chambre*, as a French cook in a friend's family once styled potatoes with their jackets on.

The girls' dining-hall is gayer than the boys': there are more decorations, wreaths, and festoons. The vista formed by the numerous chains of laurel leaves and flowers gives a tent-like appearance to the long room. On the walls texts of Scripture, Christmas welcomes, and New Year's wishes, are marked out in green leaves on a white ground. The quaint dress of the girls, their white tippets and aprons and high mob caps, give them a prim, old-fashioned appearance. This is most remarkable in the little toddlers of the infants' room, where the attraction to the visitors seems to culminate, their interest apparently increasing as the children's age diminishes. About forty little boys and girls, each dressed like the elder ones, and looking even more prim and old-fashioned than their seniors, are seated round two tables, on each of which stands that delight of the little ones, a Christmas tree with real bonbons and toys. A tiny girl in a mob cap, at a signal from her governess, stands between the tables, folds her hands and lisps a baby prayer for blessings, and then takes her seat and is willing to share her cake with any one who talks to her. No unnecessary restraint is placed on these little ones, who act and speak with the freedom of artless childhood.

A general expression of tenderness passes over the

countenances of the lookers-on who crowd into the room. Exclamations, such as "Is not that a dear little thing?" "Are they not good little creatures?" burst involuntarily from their lips. I have often wondered when noticing these tender mites whether a mother ever comes to see if amongst all these little ones she can find her own darling; how with beating heart her eye must glance from one baby face to another, all to a casual observer so alike, till at last she recognises some lineament which recalls to her mind the little sickly babe she with a sad heart and tearful eye had consigned some years before to the care of strangers, and how when she has done so, she must long to rush forward and clasp the little one to her bosom.

When their meal is over, a number of the elder girls take charge of the infants, and lead them into their school-room, a fine large apartment, where seats are arranged in the usual greenhouse fashion of infant schools. A merry crowd passes into it. The high starched caps, which form such an important item of the little girls' attire, will not bear any rough treatment; so before beginning to play, each one delivers up her head-dress to a big girl, who collects them in a basket, and they are then at liberty to run about on the nicely matted floor without the risk of losing their mob caps, in which they remind one of portraits of our great-grandmothers. On the walls are coloured pictures of elephants, lions, whales, and other animals; and two large rocking-horses and a grand piano attest the thoughtful kindness of some friends towards these deserted little ones.

The elder boys and girls are also marched in good order to their respective play-rooms, where we may bid them adieu, feeling that all that kindness can do is being done to make these homeless children feel that, though their natural protectors are absent, their Heavenly Father provides for and cares for them.

This institution has an interesting history. It dates from the year 1737, when Captain Coram, a native of Lyme Regis, succeeded, after much opposition, in founding this establishment. His statue now occupies a central position in the grounds fronting Guildford Street, and some streets in the neighbourhood are called after him. He was a man of much energy and public spirit, and his life contains many interesting episodes. Part of it was spent at Taunton, in Massachusetts, United States, where he founded a library for the use of the town, parts of which still exist. Some of the volumes show by their inscriptions that he had begged them from influential friends in Europe. He also gave a plot of ground for the site of a church and school-house. He was afterwards shipwrecked in the *Sea Flower*, off Cuxhaven, and plundered by pirates. When residing at Rotherhithe his compassion was excited by the sight of deserted infants, and after many years of hard work, he procured a royal charter for the incorporation of an establishment for their reception. The governors fixed on a healthy site for the erection of their hospital, by selecting what was then known as Lamb's Conduit Fields, a plot of meadow land beyond the limits of the city of London. The Earl of Salisbury, the owner of the land, refused to sell a smaller portion than fifty-six acres, which was purchased for £5,500. This land became very valuable, as London was gradually extended to the verge of the hospital enclosure, and the ground-rents arising from it now bring in a revenue of about £5,000 per annum, which will eventually be greatly increased, for in

twenty-seven years the leases fall into the hands of the governors, and the hospital will then be in possession of a very large income.

The building is a handsome structure, well adapted for its purpose. The centre is occupied by the chapel; the right wing is appropriated to the boys, and the left to the girls and infants. Its inmates, male and female, number on an average three hundred and twenty to thirty. There is a nursery in the country for little ones under four years of age. The building is placed in the middle of a large open space of ground which serves as a place of recreation for the children in fine weather, while there are covered arcades for rainy days.

The walls of the committee and drawing rooms are covered with fine engravings and paintings, for several artists have contributed to the maintenance of the institution. In fact, the kindred arts of painting and music appear to find a congenial home in the Foundling Hospital, as if all the tenderest and most elevated sentiments of our nature clustered round the shelter of helpless childhood. As a means of attracting visitors to the rising institution, artists sent their works to it, where they remained for a while on view, and this exhibition suggested the idea and was the germ of that now held annually by the Royal Academy. Hogarth's celebrated work, "The March to Finchley," hangs in one of the principal rooms; it was, much to the artist's satisfaction, won by a ticket which he had presented to the hospital in the lottery he had arranged for its benefit. "The Finding of Moses," "Christ Blessing little Children," as well as the famous fragment of Raphael's cartoon of "The Massacre of the Innocents," are among the art treasures belonging to the Foundling. Haydon considered this fragment unsurpassed in power and variety of expression, and he took Canova to the hospital expressly to see it. Miss Brownlow's charming pictures carry the art traditions to the present day, and "The Child Restored to its Mother" represents one of the most pleasing episodes in hospital life.

Handel assisted greatly in consolidating the labours of the good old Captain Coram, by the exercise of his talents. Besides other performances in aid of the institution, he presided annually, until blindness prevented him, at the production of his masterpiece, "The Messiah," and thereby raised the large sum of £7,000. Dr. Burney wished to create a national school of music within the walls of the Foundling, considering that its inmates were particularly calculated, from the moral atmosphere in which they lived, to become worthy exponents of the art. This scheme was not fully carried out, but a juvenile band has been organised with much success, and the fresh harmonious voices of well-trained young choristers give a peculiar charm to the services in the chapel of the Foundling Hospital.

Besides the inmates of the hospital in London, other orphans and helpless illegitimate children are supported from the funds, about 500 in all being benefited by the charity. There is also a benevolent fund, for the relief of aged and infirm persons who were inmates of the hospital when infants. For above a century this institution has ceased to be a receptacle for foundlings, though the original name has been retained. A resolution was passed in 1771 to call it "The Orphan Hospital," but was afterwards rescinded. Though the general management of the charity is good, it is thought that the revenues are now so large that wider usefulness should be aimed at.